

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. General Remarks.

Applicants respectfully request that the above amendments be entered and further request reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the remarks contained herein.

II. Disposition of the Claims.

Claims 1-76 are pending in this case. Claims 1-8, 40-46, and 74-76 have been cancelled herein. New claims 77 and 78 have been added herein. Claims 9, 20, 26, 33, 37, 47, 48, 54, 59, 63, and 66 are currently amended herein. This amendment adds no new matter to the application, and is supported by the specification as filed. All the above amendments are made in a good faith effort to advance the prosecution on the merits of this case. Applicants reserve their rights to take up prosecution on the claims as originally filed in this or an appropriate continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application.

III. Remarks Regarding the Examiner's Objection to the Abstract.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract "because the term 'the present invention,' is stated in lines 1 and 4." (Office Action at 2.) While Applicants believe that the Abstract is in compliance with the *Manual of Patent Examining Procedure* (hereinafter "MPEP") section 608.01(b), Applicants have amended the Abstract in accordance with the Examiner's request. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this objection with respect to the Abstract.

IV. Remarks Regarding the Examiner's Objection to Claims 9-39 and 47-73.

The Examiner objected to claims 9-39 and 47-73 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that the subject claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Office Action, at 4.)

Accordingly, Applicants have cancelled independent claim 1, and have rewritten claims 9, 26, 47, 48, 54, 59, 63 and 66 in independent form. Moreover, Applicants have

rewritten claim 20 to depend from new independent claim 9. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9-39 and 47-73 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance therefor.

V. Remarks Regarding New Claims 77-78: No New Matter Added

New claims 77 and 78 have been added herein. These claims recite suitable epoxy resins and gases that may be used in accordance with the present invention. The epoxy resins and gases that are recited in claims 77 and 78 are disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,069,117, the relevant disclosure of which was incorporated by reference in Applicants' specification, at paragraph [0024]. Accordingly, the incorporation of these epoxy resins and gases into claims 77 and 78 does not constitute an introduction of new matter in Applicants' application. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that these claims be passed to issuance.

SUMMARY

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections. Applicants further submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit timely notice of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments, or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail.

Applicants believe that \$1400.00 in fees are due with this response, and have enclosed Check No. 956446 as payment therefor. However, should the Commissioner deem that any additional fees are due, including any fees for extensions of time, Applicants respectfully request that the Commissioner accept this as a Petition Therefor, and direct that any additional fees be charged to Baker Botts L.L.P. Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 063718.0301, for any underpayment of fees that may be due in association with this filing.

Respectfully submitted,



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